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Letters

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LETTERS



Readers' Letters are an important form of feedback and exchange, an opportunity to comment on past issues, and to raise questions for other's comments. Each letter that is printed extends the writer's subscription by an additional issue. Please send your letters directly to the Editor, Glen GoodKnight, 740 S. Hobart Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90005.

Kathryn Lindskoog

Orange, CA

In response of Glen GoodKnight's note [in the last issue, page 39], I certainly do not base my fraud charge on internal stylistic content *alone*, nor would I dismiss any unbiased technical investigation of Walter Hooper's manuscripts. (These farfetched charges were stated as fact by opponents of *The C.S. Lewis Hoax* and have been repeated by trusting people who mean well.)

The Warner Report of January 1989 has been discredited. It was commissioned by Walter Hooper's ally Stanley Mattson and written by two others untrained in document authentication. It is a causal essay expressing the opinion that Hooper's manuscripts are genuine, but it offers no evidence. Thus the Warner Report was pronounced insubstantial on 21 April 1989 by San Francisco document expert Jennifer Larson, who said that a genuine investigation of documents is called for. That is my position also.

In response to John D. Rateliff's provocative review titled "The Kathryn Lindskoog Hoax" (Summer 1989, pp. 53-56) I want to clarify fifteen points.

1. I never in any way insinuated that Hooper "has personally written virtually all of the books that have appeared posthumously under Lewis' name." It is obvious that most of the posthumous Lewis books are genuine, and I stated clearly my belief that Hooper could not have written the ficto-science in *The Dark Tower*. In my book I charge that Lewis did not write *The Dark Tower*, "The Man Born Blind," "Encyclopedia Boxoniana," Hooper's ungainly definition of myth, and Hooper's Narnia fragments. There is also an introduction to "Screwtape Proposes a Toast" in print now which is highly suspect; I think it is bogus.

2. I have never suggested that Hooper became guardian of Lewis' literature by worming his way into the dying Lewis' affection and displacing other friends — because I don't believe that Lewis had any great affection for Hooper or that Lewis slighted other friends or chose Hooper for the task. I suspect that Rateliff has read Eugene McGovern's 1979 misinterpretation of my opinions in *Christianity & Literature* and is unconsciously echoing them

now in *Mythlore*. (Rateliff replaced the word *wheedled* with *wormed*.)

3. Rateliff must have misread footnote 20 on p. 44, where he thinks that Carla Faust Jones "admits [the Literary Detective Program] is not 'a legitimate indicator of a writer's style.'" She admitted that it was outside the scope of her study to try to prove the accuracy of the Literary Detective Program, but she obviously trusted it and used it for her research.

4. Rateliff claims that there are sentences in "The Shoddy Lands" and "Ministering Angels" as bad as those in "The Dark Tower" and "The Man Born Blind," but he does not produce them. Which are they? I find no bad sentences in the authentic Lewis stories.

5. Rateliff cites small similarities between *The Dark Tower* and Lewis' "later" works, perhaps not realizing that an intelligent literary forger would try to "foreshadow" some of the elements in Lewis' authentic work.

6. When I consulted Madeleine L'Engle in 1987 about the possibility of a common source for her Comazotz scene and the parallel scene in *The Dark Tower*, she indicated that there was no common source. Rateliff has every right to suggest an appropriate common source when he finds one. Until then, however, I accept her judgement.

7. The mountain of papers that fed a steady three-day bonfire in January 1964 is suddenly reduced by Rateliff to three little batches of papers that were to be burned at day's end on three days in April 1964. Is Hooper himself revising the story? If so, to what extent is he reducing the two trunkfuls of manuscripts that he saved on the third day — trunks so heavy that it took all his strength to drag them to his room by means of a city bus? Will the two huge trunks now be diminished to a couple of large envelopes?

8. Rateliff claims that throughout my book I disregard the testimony of Lewis' Inklings friends such as Barfield, Tolkien, and Mathew. I have to disregard the testimony of Walter Hooper's defender Owen Barfield, but not the others. Rateliff seems unaware that Tolkien's memory of a lost Lewis story called "The Man Born Blind" in no way authenticates Hooper's story "The Man Born Blind." Forgers like to try to reproduce lost documents. Owen Barfield is Hooper's only witness for the authenticity of Hooper's "The Man Born Blind." Consider the source.

9. Rateliff claims that I dismissed Gervase Mathew's account of hearing Lewis read *The Dark Tower* as "the unreliable memory of a sick old man." That was in fact part of Sheldon Vanauken's imaginative scenario that I reported

as an alternative theory (see p. 37). In contrast, I don't think Gervase Mathew ever said one word about *The Dark Tower* (see p. 34). Once Mathew was dead and buried, Hooper started to use him as a dummy to witness for *The Dark Tower*. I warn readers to watch out whenever Hooper quotes dead people to buttress his stories. Consider the source.

10. Rateliff unblinkingly accepts the 1988 story of (Walter Hooper) catching Leonard Miller in the act of looting Warren Lewis' still-warm corpse in 1973. (I asked Douglas Gresham about his source for this incident, and he answered my letter courteously but avoided that subject.) The conclusion of Gresham's story is that Leonard Miller successfully stole the entire furnishings of the Kilns before Warren's funeral. Yet Douglas Gresham was not even in England when all this purported looting was observed (by Walter Hooper, I assume), and it was never reported to the police. Furthermore, there is absolute proof that Leonard Miller did not steal the furnishings of the Kilns, because they were properly inherited by Lady Dunbar. (Certain pieces are now in the Wade Center in Wheaton, Illinois.) This entire Miller-the-vulture story looks to me like part of an ongoing attempt to discredit Warren Lewis' and Leonard Miller's testimony. Consider the source.

11. Rateliff questions the validity of Roger Lancelyn Green's endorsement of *The C. S. Lewis Hoax*. I will gladly show photocopies of the entire Green/Lindskoog correspondence to anyone who wants to read it, although I do not have permission to publish it. Richard Lancelyn Green's endorsement on the flyleaf of *Hoax* states his father's approval of the book. (Roger Lancelyn Green was paralyzed but retained his mental acuity until his unfortunately early death.) Rateliff's further suggestion that I may have faked Clyde Kilby's approval of *Hoax* is out of court because of Martha Kilby is alive and agrees with her husband about *Hoax*. (Needless to say, the commendations of Roger Lancelyn Green, Dom Bede Griffiths, Sheldon Vanauken, Arthur C. Clarke, and Alastair Fowler—all friends or acquaintances of C.S. Lewis—do not mean that my book is correct in every detail. Nor do the commendations of literary luminaries such as Newbery winners Lloyd Alexander and Katherine Paterson, National Book Award winner Walter Wangerin, Hugo and Nebula Awards winner Ursula Le Guin, and the 1989 Pulitzer Prize winner Richard Wilbur. But—for what they are worth—these commendations are all genuine.)

12. Rateliff's scenario about the Barfield-Lindskoog relationship is largely inaccurate. "It is painful indeed to witness this," he says. I think that if he got the facts he would find his scenario less painful. I know I would.

13. Rateliff complains that I did not reproduce examples of Hooper's and Lewis' script to prove that they look alike. My publisher chose not to reproduce any handwriting or typewriter samples; but I included Walter Hooper's own claim that his handwriting is identical to Lewis' and the printed source, including samples, that anyone can check (see footnote 17 on p. 114). Furthermore, I explained that

everyone can see what appears to be Walter Hooper's hand duplicating lines of C.S. Lewis' handwritings in Hooper's film "Through Joy and Beyond." Rateliff somehow dismisses all of this as "inaccurate or altogether absent bibliographic notes, assertions that proof exists which she does not deign to give us."

14. I am gratified that Rateliff approves the results of my strenuous efforts to get Multnomah Press to engage Patrick Wynne to illustrate *Hoax*,... I think that no illustrator could possibly be more responsive, most astute, or more fun to work with....

When I finished reading Rateliff's review, three of his charges echoed strangely in my mind. "This is simply an attempt by one Lewis scholar to completely discredit the work of another." "It should be clear from this brief synopsis that Lindskoog's chief purpose is argument *ad hominem*." "One of the primary rules of argumentation is that to reach a valid conclusion, one must consider all the evidence, and Lindskoog fails to do this time and time again, forgetting the dictum that a one-sided argument is no argument at all." Methinks perchance Rateliff is hoist with his own petard.

David Doughan

London, England

A very scrappy letter ... just a few odd things which have caught my attention.

Sarah Beach in the "Myth for Angle-land" (*Mythlore* 58) was very interesting and thought-provoking. One additional point that occurs to me in the way in which the ethnic substratum is treated. Historically, this meant the Romanized British whom the invading English called "Welsh," and whom they eventually overran and, to a large extent, replaced. There remained many Welsh elements in English place-names (e.g. *Pendle*, *Brill*, *Chetwood*, *Gloucester*); in the *Book of Lost Tales* there are strong indications that a similar role was to be assigned to Gnomish—albeit, perversely, starting with "Warwick" (a name of apparently unambiguous Englishness) by deriving the first element from a supposed Welsh "Caer Gwâr" (a form which is unattested, to the best of my knowledge)—"Gwâr" being, of course, the Gnomish for of Kôr. Might this indicate an intention (never carried through) to displace the inconvenient Welsh still further to make room for Gnomes?

A couple of transatlantic oddities from Nancy-Lou Paterson on p. 52. (1) Why does she think that "quite simply" is an Americanism? I've heard the phrase over several decades from the lips of unimpeachable Britishness which would never have sullied themselves with a "gotten," let alone a "sidewalk." (2) What's this "savory the British so oddly serve at the conclusion of a formal dinner"? If she means cheese, this is a custom widespread elsewhere (and in my experience it can be very welcome at the end of a copious meal when offered as the alternative to a truly disgusting *coupe glacée* topped off with 10 cm of *crème chantilly*).

The [alleged] Lewis/Hooper hoax is a nothing to the conspiracy which I am in the process of tracking down. Altered by stylistic considerations (could the author of "From dark Dunharrow" really have written "Tinfang Warble"? Why does the "early Tolkien" keep on getting his Elvish wrong?), I am on the verge of uncovering a plot by Rayner Unwin, Humphrey Carpenter and the so-called "Christopher Tolkien" to present the last-named (actually a Merton undergraduate who had inadvertently discovered the Tolkien family's involvement in the notorious Secret Vice Ring, and who needed to be silenced) as the son and literary heir of J.R.R.T., and his inept inventions as Tolkien's drafts. — At present I'm having a little difficulty establishing all of the above on purely stylistic/linguistic evidence, but I'll let you know when I'm ready to go public.

Robert Elwood

Pasadena, CA

While appreciating the carefully-argued recent reviews in *Mythlore* of Kay Lindscoog's controversial *The C.S. Lewis Hoax*, I am disappointed there thus far none have appeared roundly defending the book. Given the impressive list of major Lewis figures who were at least willing to be cited on the jacket, it should not have been impossible to get a review by a staunch partisan of Kay's position.

The rebuttal of her critics should not have been an excessively arduous task. For while it is clear there are vocal people who do not like this book, wish it had never been published, and would like to spread an impression that it has been, or will be, "disapproved," they inevitably evade the central issue. That issue is not the authorship of *The Dark Tower*, or whether the title of *They Stand Together* has some covert meaning, but simply the basic credibility of the man Kay puts "in the dock," Walter Hooper. The jury may be out for a long time on those and other specific matters. But the fundamental point is just that Kay casts doubt on all claims about Lewis and his work that rest mainly on the testimony of Walter Hooper by showing that he has misrepresented his relationship to Lewis from the outset. This allegation, well documented, has not been substantially addressed by her critics, who have preferred to direct slurs at her literary integrity and to focus on essentially second-level problems.

It is never a pleasant matter, of course, to question the claims on which a person has based a long career. But when that person has gone very public with that career, through extensive writing and lecturing, it is the distressing duty of those concerned with honesty and truth to raise just as publicly questions about it which persist, and cannot be brushed aside because truth itself is at stake. No one was more concerned with the radical demands for truth as he saw it than Lewis himself, who sacrificed much for its sake. Unfortunately, the story of religion down to the recent televangelist scandals gives no assurance that those who profess to speak for religion will always put truth ahead of career. It is not an impropriety, but a courageous act in the tradition of the Hebrew prophets, for those who

care for truth to put it forcefully against those they perceive as less than candid. The prophets can be, and were, accused of harshness and one-sidedness. Yet it is their words, not those of the careerist priests, which have resounded down the centuries.

While Kay's book may or may not become immortal, or even be correct in all points, I have a sense that after the passions of the present are spent and the real historians take over, its overall perception of things will generally prevail, barring the sort of clear documented rebuttal of her account from 1963 on which thus far has not been forthcoming from critics, or better yet from the target of her attacks, who has chosen as usual to remain silent. In any case, the forthrightness and courage of Kay's book ought to be admired as stoutly as its "inopportune"ness is bemoaned by some. Truth, in season or out, is mighty and will prevail.

Gracia Fay Elwood

Pasadena, CA

I too believe that the central point at issue in the Walter Hooper case is the demonstrated fact that Walter has misrepresented the extent of his relationship with Lewis; he has shown that he is willing to deceive, yet he has had much to offer; Lewis readers are left confused.

When Robert and I visited England for six months in 1973, Walter had us for tea. He was very gracious. When I mentioned my disappointment at not getting to meet Tolkien before his death, Walter said he would have introduced me, and meant it. As Kathryn mentions in her book, Robert held forth at length about U.S. educational patterns and Walter seemed the interested outsider. Later, when we found that Walter was a U.S. American and had even taught here, Robert felt profoundly embarrassed; we felt that, without a word being said, we had been [deceived].

Is this incident so important? I don't think it cancels out Walter's graciousness to us; but it leaves me feeling confused. How can a person be good to others and yet manipulate them at the same time? Is the confusion involved the same as that described by Scott Park in his disturbing book *People of the Lie*?

I don't know, but I believe that a willingness to deceive and manipulate is, except in life-threatening situations, a cause for tears. It means that the manipulator is profoundly crippled in his/her ability to love, to relate to others "not as a means only, but always as an end also." This latter is the kind of emotional discipline in relationships that Lewis valued, and for good reason.

How would Lewis have regarded (or how does he regard) the pitched battle that has broken out over this whole affair? It is well known that he enjoyed a lively exchange, even a scrap, but that essentially it was good-natured, and centered in charity. Truth matters because people matter — all people. It should be possible for us to maintain enough emotional discipline to find out the truth without verbal violence.

Janice K. Coulter

Milwaukee, WI

In his forward to *The C.S. Lewis Hoax*, Joe R. Christopher urges that Kathryn Lindskoog's arguments be repeated until Walter Hooper responds to them. He asks, "What else can honest scholars do?"

They can do what honest scholars have always done. Dig for the facts. It is the only way to discover the truth.

Hooper cannot be compelled to respond and his silence cannot reasonably be construed as an admission of wrongdoing regardless of how often Lindskoog's theories are repeated. The veracity of any statement he may choose to make would probably be questioned by those now impugning his integrity.

Honest scholars who mistrust Hooper won't simply parrot arguments, engage in personal attacks, or publish unsubstantiated suspicions. They will investigate and report the facts.

Paul Nolan Hyde

Simi Valley, CA

In response to the query about the function and dubious value of the "Reverse Spelling Dictionaries," may I say in all seriousness that I am not the inventor of such a thing. Such dictionaries exist for many languages including English. The purpose is to group all words in a body of material with the same or similar suffixes in one place. For example, if you wished to find all of the words in the language that ended with the suffix "-able", the reverse dictionary would have them all listed under "elba-". In English this is not a particularly informative exercise, but in inflected languages such as Old English, German, or Finnish, this sort of printed arrangement can be quite useful. My purpose in creating "Reverse Dictionaries" for the Middle-earth languages was to provide a way whereby the conjugations and inflections of nouns, verbs, and other parts of speech might be easily analyzed. Needless to say, it was not done to invoke consternation or mental anguish in the hearts and minds of the readership; I have more effective methods for doing that.

Tales Newly Told (Continued from page 53)

her magical talent. She is also divided between her native earth-magic, which is invasive, hard to control, and sometimes frighteningly impersonal, and her attraction to smithcraft — also a kind of magic, but a conscious, controlled, "light" one.

The setting of *The Sarsen Witch* is essentially the same as that of Henry Treece's *The Golden Warriors*, and Kernaghan's meticulous depiction of seasonal rituals recalls Diana Paxson's tales of proto-historic Britain (as her evocation of exiled Atlanteans may owe something to Tolkien's idea of Númenor), but nevertheless this vision of the Bronze Age seems fresh and individual. Kernaghan definitely belongs to the first school of historical fantasists mentioned above: in a quiet, unassuming but powerfully effective style, she paints a realistic and colorful picture of the chalk downs of southern England as they must have

appeared in their pristine splendor, changing slowly through the seasons. We are made constantly aware of the characters' experience of the natural world around them, and of its relation to the magical influences in their lives.

(One very minor but amusing anachronism: at one point Naeri and her companions are shown hunting pheasant. But pheasants were only introduced to Britain during the Roman era!)

The Bronze Age of Europe holds a great fascination for the modern imagination, because, although we have so little concrete knowledge of the period, so much of the myth and magic in our own culture seems to have its dim, half-perceived origin there. Eileen Kernaghan's mythopoeic glance at that era is most enriching. One hopes that she will journey there again, to uncover new aspects of it for us.

Perpetual Winter (Continued from page 36)

adherence to which ensures that the protagonist will remain on the right path. Nor does this world offer a hope of deliverance from a higher sphere. Lewis' characters inhabit a multi-level universe, in which the natural world has connections to a higher realm. Aslan's country, the real world of which the known worlds of mortality and mutability are only shadows, can be visited and eventually inhabited by the heroes. McKillip's is a self-contained universe, where the young hero and heroine, attempting to escape the devastation of the thawing ice, are cast "back to the bewildering shores of the world" — a world that is "only another tiny island, ringed with a great dragon of stars and night" (McKillip, 165).

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